

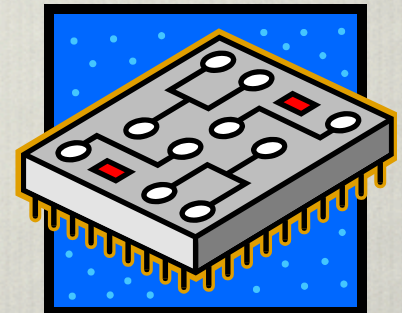
**Summative
vs.
Formative
Assessment**

What Is Formative Assessment?

Formative assessment is a systematic process to **continuously gather evidence about learning**. The data **are used** to identify a student's current level of learning and to adapt lessons to help the student reach the desired learning goal. In formative assessment, **students are active participants with their teachers**, sharing learning goals and understanding how their learning is progressing, what next steps they need to take, and how to take them.

What Is Summative Assessment?

Evaluation administered at the conclusion of a unit of instruction to comprehensively assess student learning and the effectiveness of an instructional method or program.



Summative vs. Formative Assessments

With summative assessments, students are evaluated upon completion of the work and the focus is on the final product.

With formative assessments, students are evaluated during the work process and the focus is on improving the process.

For example, a summative assessment would be a state achievement test and a formative assessment would be a teacher response to journal entries.

National Council of Teachers of English

Think Soup

- ❖ Formative assessment is when the chef tastes the soup
- ❖ Summative assessment is when the diner eats the soup



Assessment **for**
Learning

Assessment **of**
Learning

Assessment for Learning	Assessment of Learning
Teachers, students and parents are the primary users	Teachers, principals, supervisors, program planners, and policy makers are the primary users
During learning	After learning
Used to provide information on what and how to improve achievement	Used to certify student competence
Used by teachers to identify and respond to student needs	Used to rank and sort students
Purpose: improve learning	Purpose: document achievement of standards
Primary motivator: belief that success is achievable	Primary motivator: threat of punishment, promise of reward
Continuous	Periodic
Examples: peer assessment, using rubrics with students, descriptive feedback	Examples: final exams, placement tests, state assessments, unit tests

It is the *use we make* of the assessment information, not the instrument itself, that determines whether it is *formative* or *summative*.

Formative Assessments

It is not the assessments themselves that are formative or summative but how they are used.

- ❖ Not the same as “ongoing” assessments
- ❖ Not just “small” assessments
- ❖ Must be frequent
- ❖ Need to be specific in the feedback provided
- ❖ Should be directly related to skills/knowledge
- ❖ Not just comprehension – but understanding

Formative Assessment in Teachers' Hands

1. Who is and is not understanding the lesson?
2. What are this student's strengths and needs?
3. What misconceptions do I need to address?
4. What feedback should I give students?
5. What adjustments should I make to instruction?
6. How should I group students?
7. What differentiation do I need to prepare?

—Chappuis, 2009, p. 9

The Five Critical Elements of Formative Assessment



Five Critical Elements of Formative Assessment

1. Indicate how students are moving toward proficiency of a standard
2. Identify the current level of understanding in relation to expectations
3. Provide specific and appropriate feedback
4. Engage students in the process
5. Provide time, support, and instruction in order for students to adjust, implement, and process their learning

1. Indicate how students are moving toward proficiency of a standard

- ❖ The skills and knowledge associated with the standard are clear and obtainable.
- ❖ Students know where they are on the learning continuum – they know the target
- ❖ Students can identify what needs to be accomplished next

2. Identify the current level of understanding in relation to expectations

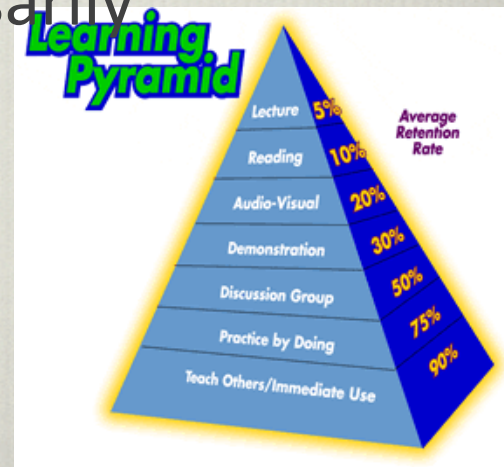
- ❖ Recognize what skills or understandings are weak or missing
- ❖ Specifically identifies what is necessary to move to the next step
- ❖ Looks at foundational issues as well as recent instruction
- ❖ Clearly shows the gap between current and next level learning

3. Provide specific and appropriate feedback

- ❖ It should be given promptly
- ❖ Oral feedback (including discussion) is the most effective
- ❖ Comments should be limited in number and should give specific advice as to how goals can be achieved
- ❖ It should give the student a sense of what has been achieved as well as improvement still needs to be mastered
- ❖ Grades are not helpful in a formative environment
- ❖ Targets and progress should be discussed with students while they are working on the task
- ❖ Students should reflect on the feedback and be given time to work on improvements

4. Engage students in the process

- ❖ Teachers must create an environment where students feel that they are partners in the learning process
- ❖ They should reflect on their learning and be able to articulate where they are and what needs to be accomplished next
- ❖ Work with other students – not necessarily at the same level of understanding
- ❖ Students track their learning



5. Provide time, support, and instruction in order for students to adjust, implement, and process their learning

- ❖ Follow assessments with time to practice
- ❖ Make sure additional (and different) instruction is provided
- ❖ Work with students independently and in small groups
- ❖ Clarify misconceptions and misunderstandings
- ❖ Review what was taught in relation to its connection the target

Five Critical Elements of Formative Assessment	1	2	3
Indicate how students are moving toward proficiency of a standard	Is general in nature and not targeted to a standard	References a standards but does not indicate where the student is related to proficiency	Specifically targets the component of a standard being worked on and identifies where they are and where they need to be
Identify the current level of understanding in relation to expectations	Is a graded piece of work with nothing to assist in student learning	May identify areas of weakness but does not clearly show skills to work on	Clearly identifies specific strengths and weaknesses as well as what next steps must be taken to be proficient at a certain level
Provide specific and appropriate feedback	Comes in the form of a letter grade, a star or other vague, non-supportive feedback	Feedback provides students with general information, some of which might be used to assist in learning	The feedback is ongoing, specific, targeted to the learning taking place, and assists the student in moving forward.
Engages students in the process	Students receive a grade but are not sure what they did wrong or what to do next	Students go over the assessment and discuss what they got wrong and, perhaps, why. Next steps are not outlined.	Students and teachers discuss the goals and expectations and then discuss those as a result of the assessment. Students then describe what they will do next.
Provide time, support, and instruction in order for students to adjust, implement, and process their learning	The assessment is returned with errors noted and the teacher moves to the next topic	Students are given time to correct their errors but are not assisted by either their peers or the teacher	Time is provided for students to work independently or in small groups while the teacher provides assistance, mini-teaching sessions, and clarifies misconceptions

Types of Assessment Strategies

- ❖ **Summaries and Reflections** Students stop and reflect, make sense of what they have heard or read, derive personal meaning from their learning experiences, and/or increase their metacognitive skills. These require that students use content-specific language.
- ❖ **Lists, Charts, and Graphic Organizers** Students organize information, make connections, and note relationships through the use of various graphic organizers.
- ❖ **Visual Representations of Information** Students use both words and pictures to make connections and increase memory, facilitating retrieval of information later on. This "dual coding" helps teachers address classroom diversity, preferences in learning style, and different ways of "knowing."
- ❖ **Collaborative Activities** Students have the opportunity to move and/or communicate with others as they develop and demonstrate their understanding of concepts.

What Teachers Need

❖ Four basic elements of teacher knowledge are critical:

1. Domain Knowledge

(concepts, knowledge, and skills to be taught)

2. Pedagogical Content Knowledge

(multiple models of teaching)



3. Knowledge of students' previous learning

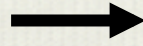
(current and previous grades)

4. Knowledge of Assessment

(range of formative assessment strategies)

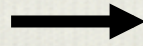
Shifts in Assessment

From assessing to learn
what students do not
know



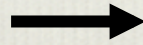
To assessing to learn what
students understand

From using results to
calculate grades



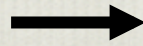
To using results to inform
instruction

From end-of-term
assessments by teachers



To students engaged in
ongoing assessment of
their work and others

From judgmental
feedback that may harm
student motivation



To descriptive feedback
that empowers and
motivates students

- ❖ To attain the achievement gains promised by formative assessment, the ultimate user of formative assessment information must be the *student*.

